



GETTING READY

1. Welcome/Opener

What You Need:

- Host
- PEEPS® marshmallow candy
- Three blindfolds
- Six chairs (tall if possible)
- Wet wipes (for cleaning up after)

Music and Sound Effects (SFX):

- Upbeat music to use as kids enter the room

Large Group Visuals (downloadable from the website):

- Theme Slide

Optional Videos (available for purchase through the 252 Media Package):

- Theme Loop Video
- Countdown Video
- Theme Video

What You Do:

- Download the slides and have them ready to use. If you do not have CG capabilities, you have Orange's permission to enlarge and print the slides on paper.
- Download music from a resource such as iTunes® and have it ready to play.
- To play the opening game, one partner will have to lay across two chairs facing down so that his or her blindfolded partner can lay under them. The blindfolded partner will reach up and attempt to stick a ripped peep to the face of their partner. The partner on the chair can verbally direct his or her teammate.

2. Communicator Script

What You Need:

- Communicator
- Bible

Music and Sound Effects (SFX):

- Upbeat music to use as kids exit the room

Large Group Visuals:

- Bible Story Images 1-9
- Key Question Slide

What You Do:

- Download the slides and have them ready to use. If you do not have CG capabilities, you have Orange's permission to enlarge and print the slides on paper.

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3. Worship

What You Need:

- Worship Leader(s)

Above All

Bible Story: Above All (Crucified and Risen) • *John 18:12–20:23 (Supporting: John 16, Matthew 26)*

Bottom Line: Jesus put us first.

Key Question: What does Easter mean to you?

Memory Verse: *Don't do anything only to get ahead. Don't do it because you are proud. Instead, be humble. Value others more than yourselves.* Philippians 2:3 (NirV)

Life App: Humility—Putting others first by giving up what you think you deserve

Basic Truth: I can trust God no matter what.

Story: Communicating God's Truth in Engaging Ways (Large Group, 35 minutes)

Engage kids' hearts through a dynamic and interactive Bible story, worship, and prayer experience in a Large Group setting.

SFX: *Play high-energy music as kids enter.*

CG: *Theme Slide*

Host enters.

Welcome

Host has lots of energy as he or she welcomes everyone to [Name of Environment]. Host is relatable and inviting. Host can talk about something that happened culturally throughout the week like a big sports game, movie opening (Trolls World Tour, etc.), a viral video on YouTube, etc. Host tells them how excited he or she is that they're there and briefly runs through what they can expect. This is especially helpful for first-time guests to make them feel like they know what's happening.

Opener

HOST: "Happy Easter, everyone! Well, what a good-looking bunch of people we've got here! Good to see you all as we celebrate that Jesus is alive! That's right! Jesus is risen, and all morning long we get to celebrate that fact. Now remember, what Jesus did turned our world upside down, so I have another *upside down* game to get us started today. I need three teams of two . . . so who wants to partner up for a . . . sticky situation?"

Choose six volunteers and bring them on stage.

“Okay, now, how many of you all like these?”

Host reveals the PEEPS® marshmallow candy.

“Yeah, Peeps are pretty hit or miss. Some people love them and, well, others not so much. Have you ever noticed that when you (*demonstrate*) rip them in half, they get really sticky . . . I mean like, REALLY sticky? Yeah, we noticed it too. And we decided to make a sort of game out of it.”

“Here’s how it goes. One partner will lay across these two chairs facing down toward the ground with their hands by their sides. You may not use your hands at all. The other partner will lay on the ground facing up looking at the partner who is face-down on the chairs. Well, not really looking because you have to wear one of these . . .”

Hands out a blindfold to one of the partners each.

“When I say GO, the blindfolded partner laying on the ground will take a Peep and RIP it in half. Then they’ll reach up and stick it to the face of their partner. Partner, you can tell them where to aim, but you may not use your hands to help them. The first team to successfully get 10 halves stuck to their face at one time—they can’t fall off—wins. Got it?”

Get the teams into position. Have a leader as a spotter for each team to count halves. Say “GO.” After there is a winner, give a wet wipe to both partners to clean off. Declare a winner and give Peeps as a prize.

Note: You could also play this as a timed game and see who can get the most to stick to their partner’s face in a set time (two minutes, etc.).

“What an awesome game. I can’t believe you did that upside down! Now, let’s all stand and worship together!”

Worship

Communicator enters Worship Leaders exit.

COMMUNICATOR SCRIPT

Introduction

COMMUNICATOR: “Happy Easter, everyone! This is such an important day for followers of Jesus, and I’m so glad we get to celebrate it together!”

“Let’s find out what you’re doing today. Turn to your group and talk about how you’re celebrating Easter this week or what you have done in the past. GO!”

After a few minutes, call everyone back.

“From the conversations I heard, it sounds like you all will have some great times today! Anyone want to share what they’re doing to celebrate Easter this year?”

Depending on time, take three to five answers from the crowd and comment on them accordingly.

TENSION

COMMUNICATOR: “Wow! I wish I was coming to your celebrations! Easter is one of those holidays that we sometimes take for granted. We have traditions about what we eat and what we do. Dinner with our whole family to Easter egg hunts to getting up super early to come to church. Many of us might even know that Easter celebrates how Jesus died but then rose again. But just because we know what happened and how to celebrate, we might not really understand why. WHY did Jesus do all that for us? Great question. And that question has an answer each and every one of us needs to hear!”

TRUTH

COMMUNICATOR: “To help answer that question, let’s head to the Book of John in the New Testament of the Bible. Now you might recognize the name John when reading the story of Jesus, because his name shows up quite a bit. In fact, John was one of Jesus’ closest disciples and later on wrote about his experiences so that people like you and I would know about who Jesus is and what He did.”

“Last week, we learned about how the religious leaders began plotting against Jesus. Even one of Jesus’ own disciples, Judas, got involved with the plot. They celebrated Passover—their last meal together—then went out to the Mount of Olives, where soon after He was arrested.”

“But what happened next was about to go from bad to worse.”

“(Read directly from John 18:12-14, NIRV) ‘Then the group of soldiers, their commander and the Jewish officials arrested Jesus. They tied him up and brought him first to Annas. He was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest at that time. Caiaphas had advised the Jewish leaders that it would be good if one man died for the people.’”

CG: Bible Story Image 1: Handcuffs

“Jesus was arrested and brought to the Jewish authorities, where they would decide what to do with Him. Notice that phrase: ‘it would be good if one man died for the people.’ They didn’t know it yet, but this was why Jesus was there in the first place.

“But I’m getting ahead of myself. Meanwhile, Peter, one of Jesus’ closest and most trusted disciples was also being questioned. But not by the authorities. A servant girl asked if he knew Jesus, and Peter denied knowing Him. One of Jesus’ closest friends was too scared to even be associated with Him. It was a dark, dark time.”

“(Read directly from John 18:19, NIV) ‘Meanwhile, the high priest questioned Jesus. He asked him about his disciples and his teaching.’”

CG: Bible Story Image 2: Gavel

“After questioning Jesus, the Jewish leadership sent Him to the Roman governor. Pilate told them to judge Jesus for themselves, but their motivation is in their words to Pilate . . .”

“(Read directly from John 18:31, NIV) ‘Pilate said, ‘Take him yourselves. Judge him by your own law.’ ‘But we don’t have the right to put anyone to death,’ they complained.’”

CG: Bible Story Image 3: Tombstone

“For the religious leaders, death was the only acceptable solution to this ‘Jesus problem.’ And they needed Pilate to make that happen.”

“So, Pilate interrogated or questioned Jesus, and it seems he was surprised by what he found. In fact, afterward, Pilate declared, ‘I find no basis for a charge against him.’ And multiple times Pilate tried to give the people a way to let Jesus go . . . but at the persuading of the religious leaders, they called for Him to be killed.”

“(Read directly from John 19:1-2, NIV) Then Pilate took Jesus and had him whipped. The soldiers twisted thorns together to make a crown. They put it on Jesus’ head. Then they put a purple robe on him.

CG: Bible Story Image 4: Crown of thorns

“(Read directly from John 19:16-18, NIV) ‘Finally, Pilate handed Jesus over to them to be nailed to a cross. So the soldiers took charge of Jesus. He had to carry his own cross. He went out to a place called the Skull. In the Aramaic language of the time, it was called Golgotha. There they nailed Jesus to the cross. Two other men were crucified with him. One was on each side of him. Jesus was in the middle.’”

CG: Bible Story Image 5: Three crosses in the distance

“All of the trials, all of the plotting and planning led to this moment. Jesus’ enemies finally got what they wanted. There He was, nailed to a cross. Since Jesus appeared to be defeated, it seemed like everything He had said about Himself—everything He had claimed to be and to be able to do—was a lie. Could any of it be true now?”

“Jesus breathed His last breath, and He died. His body was brought down from the cross, and He was placed in the tomb of a man named Joseph of Arimathea. And as the tomb was closed shut, this also appeared to be the close of the hopes and dreams of many who believed that this Man from Nazareth might actually be their Messiah.”

CG: Bible Story Image 6: Door closing (darkness)

“But then . . . EVERYTHING turned upside down. And it began with the rolling of a stone.”

“(Read directly from John 20:1, NIV) ‘Early on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb. It was still dark. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the entrance.’”

CG: Bible Story Image 7: Large stone

“Mary, still unsure of what was happening, ran to get Peter and John, who both raced to the tomb to see for themselves what Mary was describing. After inspecting the tomb, they ran back to tell the other disciples what they had seen, but Mary stayed behind, upset. She saw two angels in the tomb, but even more miraculous than that, she met a surprise Visitor in the garden.”

“(Read directly from John 20:14-16, NIV) ‘Then she turned around and saw Jesus standing there. But she didn’t realize that it was Jesus. He asked her, “Woman, why are you crying? Who are you looking for?” She thought he was the gardener. So she said, “Sir, did you carry him away? Tell me where you put him. Then I will go and get him.” Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned toward him. Then she cried out in the Aramaic language, “Rabboni!” Rabboni means Teacher.’”

CG: Bible Story Image 8: Glasses

“Mary saw Jesus for who He really is, realizing that the same Jesus who was crucified and buried is now alive before her very eyes! He is risen!”

Pause for response and prompt if necessary, “He is risen indeed!”

“Mary ran to tell the disciples what she had seen, and that very night, they would experience it for themselves as well.”

“(Read directly from John 20:19-20, NIV) ‘On the evening of that first day of the week, the disciples were together. They had locked the doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Jesus came in and stood among them. He said, “May peace be with you!” Then he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were very happy when they saw the Lord.’”

CG: Bible Story Image 9: Smiling faces

APPLICATION

COMMUNICATOR: “You know, for those who were there in the crowd that day when Jesus was sentenced to death, many wouldn’t have thought twice about the way that He was going to be killed. You see, Jesus wasn’t the first person to die on a cross. It was the Romans’ way of dealing with rebels and criminals, people who they saw as a threat to the peace of the mighty Roman empire. If you remember in the story, there were even two criminals next to Jesus. For many in the crowd that day, Jesus was just a Guy who got Himself caught up in something bad. This was Rome’s way of dealing with Him.”

“But we know it was not as simple as that. Just like when Jesus stopped Peter in the garden from fighting back, at any time Jesus could have stopped this. At any moment, He could have called down an army of angels to defend Himself. He could have proven His innocence.”

“So why didn’t He?”

“Because nobody was taking His life. He was giving it up. Jesus said these very words earlier in His life: ‘Nobody takes [my life] from me. I give it up myself.’ (John 10:18, NIV) But Jesus also said that after He gave up His life, He would take it back again. He was referring to His resurrection.”

“You see, Jesus wasn’t a criminal who got caught on the wrong side of a rebel plot. He wasn’t a liar who finally got trapped in His own lie. He is the Son of God who came to lay down His life for you and for me, to rescue us so that we could have a relationship with God. And because Jesus rose again to new life, WE can now have new life by believing in Him, trusting in Him, and following Him. That’s why Jesus came to earth, lived a perfect life, died, and rose again! And that is definitely something to celebrate!”

LANDING

COMMUNICATOR: “Today as you go to groups, think about this:”

CG: Key Question Slide

“**What does Easter mean to you?** Whether this is your first time or your eleventh time celebrating Easter, it’s important to thinking about why you celebrate it. If you’re not sure, that’s ok! If you have questions about Jesus and Easter, that’s ok, too! That’s why we hang out here each week: to discover more about Jesus and how His life impacts our own. For some of you, you might have just realized that you want to put your trust in Jesus. If that’s the case, be sure to talk to your Small Group Leader and someone at home! They’d love to help you understand what it means to put your trust in Jesus and have new life through Him! Before we head to Small Groups, let’s pray and that God for Jesus!”

Communicator leads group in a prayer related to what they just heard. After prayer, Communicator dismisses kids to Small Group.

SFX: Play high-energy music as the kids exit.

Optional Video (Media Package): Th